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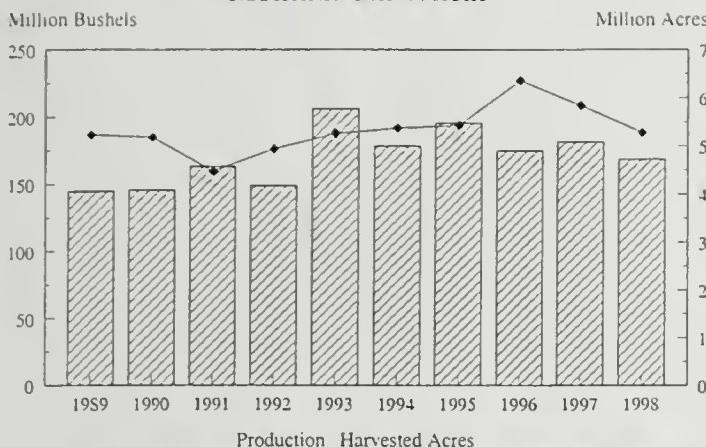
Annual Summary 1998

Released: February 26, 1999

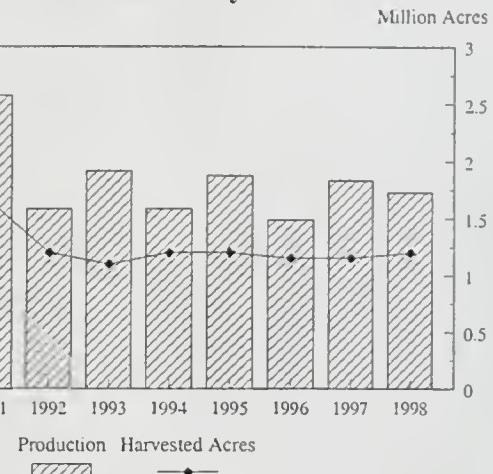
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Montana All Wheat



Montana Barley



PLEASE RETURN

Dry conditions during the fall of 1997 led winter wheat producers to plant the smallest acreage since 1941. Montana's 1998 winter wheat production was estimated at 48.75 million bushels, down 12% from 1997 and the lowest production since the severe drought of 1988. The 1998 average yield was 39 bushels per acre, which was 1 bushel more than last year's average and was fourth highest on record.

Poor prices and low moisture conditions in the fall of 1998 caused Montana winter wheat producers to seed the smallest winter wheat crop since 1937. Winter wheat seeding for 1999 harvest totaled 1.05 million acres, down 25 percent from last year's 1.4 million acres. Current moisture conditions are generally good, but the lack of snow cover is a concern to producers.

Spring wheat production was estimated at 108 million bushels, down 9% from last year, but the third largest crop on record only behind 1995 and 1997 production. The seeded acreage was 3.8 million acres, 450,000 acres less than 1997 and the smallest acreage seeded since 1994. Yields averaged 30 bushels per acre, up 1 bushel from 1997, but 1.4 bushels below the last five-year average which includes the exceptional yields produced in 1993 and 1995 in North Central Montana.

Montana durum wheat growers planted 450,000 acres and harvested 430,000 acres, both significantly higher than last

year and the largest planted acreage since 1981. The average yield was 28.0 bushels per acre, 2 bushels more than last year. Total production was estimated at 12.04 million bushels, up nearly 60 percent from last year and the largest durum production since 1956.

Barley planted acreage in Montana was estimated at 1.35 million acres, up 100,000 acres from 1997. Harvested acreage was estimated at 1.2 million acres, up 50,000 acres from last year. Average yields were set at 48 bushels per acre, down 5 bushels from last year. Total production was estimated at 57.6 million bushels, down 5 percent from last year.

Oat production was estimated at 3.24 million bushels, down 16 percent from last year. Planted acres, at 140,000, were unchanged from last year while harvested acres were down 10,000 acres and estimated at 60,000 acres. Yields averaged 54 bushels per acre, down 1 bushel from last year.

Montana producers harvested 18,000 acres of corn for grain in 1998, up 4,000 acres from last year. The average yield was 115.0 bushels per acre, down 20 bushels from last year. Production increased 10 percent from 1997 to 2.07 million bushels. Corn for silage acreage was estimated at 41,000 acres, down 4,000 acres from 1997. Yields averaged 21 tons per acre, the same as a year ago.

Sugar beet producers in Montana

harvested an estimated 62,400 acres this year, up 4,100 acres from a year ago. Yields increased 1.6 tons from last year to average 22.6 tons per acre. Total production was estimated at 1.41 million tons, up 15 percent from the previous year, setting a new production record.

Montana dry bean growers produced an estimated 266,000 cwt in 1998, up 9,000 cwt from 1997 and the highest production since 1947. Growers harvested 12,200 acres with a yield of 21.8 cwt per acre compared with last year's 11,700 acres harvested with a yield of 22.0 cwt per acre.

Fall potato production in Montana totaled 3.18 million cwt, down 4 percent from last year. Producers harvested 10,600 acres compared with 10,400 in 1997. Yields decreased 20 cwt per acre from a year ago to 300 cwt.

All hay harvested in Montana was down 100,000 acres from last year at 2.5 million acres. All hay production was 5.02 million tons down 8 percent or 460,000 tons from a year ago. Alfalfa hay harvested acreage was 1.70 million acres, up 50,000 acres from last season. The average yield was 2.2 tons per acre compared with 2.4 tons per acre in 1997. Other hay harvested acreage was 800,000 and the average yield was 1.6 tons per acre, the same as last year. Montana hay stocks were estimated at 4.57 million tons on December 1, down 9 percent from last

Montana Annual Crop Summary, 1995-98 1/

Crop	Year	Acreage		Yield Per Acre	Total Production	Season Avg Price	Value of Production	US Production
		Planted	Harvested					
		Thousands	Bushels	Thousands		Thousands	Thousands	Thousands
Winter Wheat	1995	1,500	1,370	40.0	54,800	\$**4.62	\$253,176	1,545,303
	1996	2,150	1,980	31.0	61,380	4.24	260,251	1,469,618
	1997	1,600	1,450	38.0	55,100	3.40	187,340	1,845,528
	1998	1,400	1,250	39.0	48,750	2.85	138,938	1,880,605
Durum Wheat	1995	270	265	30.0	7,950	\$5.09	\$40,466	102,280
	1996	290	280	25.0	7,000	4.65	32,550	116,090
	1997	300	290	26.0	7,540	5.18	39,057	87,783
	1998	450	430	28.0	12,040	4.00	48,160	141,069
Other Spring Wheat	1995	3,950	3,800	35.0	**133,000	\$**4.59	\$**610,470	535,125
	1996	4,200	4,100	26.0	106,600	4.22	449,852	691,680
	1997	**4,250	**4,100	29.0	118,900	3.58	425,662	548,155
	1998	3,800	3,600	30.0	108,000	3.40	367,200	528,709
All Wheat	1995	5,720	5,435	36.0	195,750	\$**4.63	\$**904,112	2,182,708
	1996	**6,640	**6,360	27.5	174,980	4.24	742,653	2,277,388
	1997	6,150	5,840	31.1	181,540	3.62	652,059	2,481,466
	1998	5,650	5,280	32.0	168,790	3.35	554,298	2,550,383
Barley	1995	1,300	1,200	52.0	62,400	\$3.00	\$187,200	359,376
	1996	1,250	1,150	43.0	49,450	**3.07	151,812	392,433
	1997	1,250	1,150	53.0	60,950	2.83	172,489	359,878
	1998	1,350	1,200	48.0	57,600	2.25	129,600	352,445
Oats	1995	145	80	59.0	4,720	\$1.75	\$8,260	161,094
	1996	*110	50	40.0	2,000	1.91	3,820	153,245
	1997	140	70	55.0	3,850	1.33	5,121	167,246
	1998	140	60	54.0	3,240	1.25	4,050	167,122
Corn for Grain 2/	1995	55	16	120.0	1,920	\$3.00	\$5,760	7,400,051
	1996	*55	15	**137.0	2,055	2.60	5,343	9,232,557
	1997	60	14	135.0	1,890	2.40	4,536	9,206,832
	1998	60	18	115.0	2,070	1.50	3,105	9,761,085
		Thousands	Tons	Thousands		Thousands	Thousands	Thousands
Corn for Silage	1995	--	38	20.0	760	--	--	78,181
	1996	--	39	21.0	819	--	--	86,581
	1997	--	45	21.0	945	--	--	97,192
	1998	--	41	**21.0	861	--	--	94,525
Sugar Beets	1995	55.7	55.5	21.5	1,193	\$39.90	\$47,601	28,065
	1996	57.7	57.5	22.6	1,300	48.10	62,530	26,680
	1997	59.9	58.3	21.0	1,224	40.50	49,572	29,886
	1998	64.0	62.4	22.6	1,410			32,660
Alfalfa Hay	1995	--	1,600	2.50	**4,000	\$67.50	\$270,000	84,138
	1996	--	1,700	2.10	3,570	81.00	289,170	79,139
	1997	--	1,650	2.40	3,960	80.00	316,800	78,535
	1998	--	**1,700	2.20	3,740	74.50	278,630	82,010
Other Hay	1995	--	800	**1.70	1,360	\$56.50	\$76,840	70,101
	1996	--	900	1.50	1,350	67.00	90,450	70,640
	1997	--	950	1.60	1,520	69.00	104,880	74,001
	1998	--	800	1.60	1,280	64.00	81,920	69,328
All Hay 3/	1995	--	2,400	**2.23	5,360	\$66.00	\$346,840	154,239
	1996	--	2,600	1.89	4,920	80.00	379,620	149,779
	1997	--	**2,600	2.11	**5,480	79.00	**421,680	152,536
	1998	--	2,500	2.01	5,020	73.50	360,550	151,338
Sweet Cherries 4/	1995	--	--	--	760	\$1,210.00	\$916	152,880
	1996	--	--	--	630	1,420.00	893	151,700
	1997	--	--	--	870	954.00	830	223,490
	1998	--	--	--	1,890	1,080.00	2,040	206,610
		Thousands	Cwt.	Thousands		Thousands	Thousands	Thousands
Fall Potatoes	1995	9.8	9.8	300.0	2,940	\$9.35	\$27,489	445,099
	1996	10.4	10.2	315.0	3,213	6.60	21,206	499,254
	1997	10.4	10.4	**320.0	**3,328	7.05	23,462	467,091
	1998	10.6	10.6	300.0	3,180	7.95	25,281	477,754
Dry Beans	1995	11.0	10.8	19.0	205	\$16.10	\$3,301	30,689
	1996	10.5	10.3	**22.8	235	24.50	5,758	27,912
	1997	12.2	11.7	22.0	257	19.40	4,986	29,370
	1998	12.6	12.2	21.8	266	16.40	4,362	30,828

1/ All estimates for 1998 are preliminary. 2/ Planted for all purposes 3/ Price of baled hay 4/ Utilized production in actual tons

*Record low **Record high